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**B. AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

In order to better assist the Examiner with the prosecution of the case, the current pending claims have been included in their entirety for which reconsideration is requested.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to at least one intended recipient;

retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

comparing a characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit ~~for said file attachment~~; and

responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum recipient limit ~~for said file attachment~~, requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, such that if a virus is attempting to self-propagate by sending said electronic mail message said attempt is mitigated.

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2. (Original) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with a maximum recipient limit for said electronic mail message; and

responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum number of recipients for said electronic mail message, requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit further comprises:

comparing at least one address for said at least one intended recipient with an address book of a plurality of recipients;

calculating a number of said at least one address of said at least one intended recipient matching addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients; and

determining whether a number of said matching addresses exceeds a maximum limit of addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients.

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5. Cancelled.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 1 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization, alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked.

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9. (Currently Amended) A system for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

a computing system communicatively connected to a network;

said computing system further comprising:

means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to at least one intended recipient;

means for retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

means for comparing a characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit for said file attachment; and

means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum recipient limit for said file attachment.

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10. (Original) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, said computing system further comprising:

means for comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with a maximum recipient limit for said electronic mail message; and

means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum number of recipients for said electronic mail message.

11. (Original) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

means for detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

12. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit further comprises:

means for comparing at least one address for said at least one intended recipient with an address book of a plurality of recipients;

means for calculating a number of said at least one address of said at least one intended recipient matching addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients; and

means for determining whether a number of said matching addresses exceeds a maximum limit of addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients.

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13. Cancelled.

14. (Original) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

means for requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

15. (Original) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means for receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

16. (Original) The system according to claim 9 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization, for alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked.

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17. (Currently Amended) A computer program product for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, comprising:

a recording medium;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment to at least one intended recipient;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for retrieving a maximum recipient limit specified for a particular extension type of file attachment from among a plurality of extension types of file attachments, wherein an extension type of said file attachment matches said particular extension type of said file attachment;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for comparing a characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit ~~for said file attachment~~; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum recipient limit ~~for said file attachment~~.

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18. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with a maximum recipient limit for said electronic mail message; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message, responsive to said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient exceeding said maximum number of recipients for said electronic mail message.

19. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for receiving a request to send an electronic mail message with a file attachment further comprises:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for detecting a file embedded within said electronic mail message as a file attachment.

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20. (Currently Amended) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for comparing said characteristic of said at least one intended recipient with [a] said maximum recipient limit further comprises:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for comparing at least one address for said at least one intended recipient with an address book of a plurality of recipients;

means, recorded on said recording medium, for calculating a number of said at least one address of said at least one intended recipient matching addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients; and

means, recorded on said recording medium, for determining whether a number of said matching addresses exceeds a maximum limit of addresses within said address book of said plurality of recipients.

21. Cancelled

22. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, wherein said means for requesting a sender authorization prior to sending said electronic mail message further comprises:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for requesting at least one of an entry of a password as authorization and a manual sender input.

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23. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for receiving said maximum recipient limit from at least one of a network administrator and a user.

24. (Original) The computer program product according to claim 17 for mitigating self-propagating electronic mail viruses, further comprising:

means, recorded on said recording medium, for alerting a network administrator that said electronic mail message was blocked, responsive to receiving a denial of said sender authorization.